

## CLAIMS:

1. A method for identifying and diagnosing prokaryotic infectious agents, said method comprising the steps of
  - 5 obtaining a sample from a source wherein said sample contains prokaryotic infectious agents,  
inoculating a cell growth substrate comprising submucosal tissue of a warm-blooded vertebrate with the sample wherein the submucosal tissue is delaminated from muscle layers and the luminal portion of tunica mucosa,  
10 culturing the sample on said substrate under conditions conducive to the proliferation of said prokaryotic infectious agents.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the sample is taken from a vertebrate species.
3. A method for analyzing, *in vitro*, the growth characteristics of
  - 15 prokaryotic infectious agents, said method comprising the steps of  
inoculating a cell growth substrate comprising submucosal tissue of a warm-blooded vertebrate with the prokaryotic infectious agent wherein the submucosal tissue is delaminated from muscle layers and the luminal portion of tunica mucosa,  
culturing the prokaryotic infectious agent on said substrate under a  
20 selected variable cell growth condition, and;  
histologically examining the prokaryotic infectious agent inoculated on said substrate.